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BALTIMORE MAN SENTENCED FOR IDENTITY FRAUD

Baltimore, Maryland. Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that Larry Lamont Bush, age 42, of Baltimore, Maryland was sentenced today by United States District Judge Andre M. Davis to 105 months in prison followed by five years supervised release, following a February, 2003 jury trial in which Bush was convicted of 49 counts of wire fraud, bank fraud, fraudulent use of a social security number and passing Treasury checks with forged endorsements.

According to trial evidence, Bush stole the identities of strangers whose biographical information he obtained from co-conspirators employed at Charlestown, a retirement community in Towson, and Johns Hopkins Hospital. Bush then obtained credit reports on such residents/patients, favoring the use of identities of the elderly and recently deceased persons because, according to witnesses, they were likely to have good credit and least likely to quickly detect and stop the fraud.

From March, 2000 to January, 2001, Bush applied to BMW Financial Services, and E-Loan, an internet lending service tied to the Bank of America, for a series of large car loans in order to

purchase luxury vehicles in other people's names. In order to prove his identity to the car dealership as the lender's borrower, Bush manufactured fake New Jersey drivers licenses and other identification documents with his picture. The dealership then caused a title certificate to be filed with the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration with the lender listed on the back as a lien-holder. In this way, Bush purchased two BMW SUVs, a Lexus SUV, an Infiniti SUV, and a Saab. Although the lenders relied on the lien on the title as security, Bush manufactured fake lien release letters from the lenders and sent them to the MVA, complete with forged signatures and notarizations, instructing the MVA to release the liens. Bush sold most of the vehicles.

Trial evidence further showed that in the spring of 1998, Bush stole the identity of a man named Charles B. Kendall. Using the internet, Bush applied to open an account in Kendall's name at the Arkansas National Bank, and to receive an ATM and visa credit card in Kendall's name. Bush quickly bought merchandise with the visa card and received cash with the ATM card. Bush accumulated over \$12,000 in fraudulent charges before the bank discovered the fraud and deactivated the cards.

Finally, Bush was also convicted of defrauding the Social Security Administration by depositing his step-mother's disability checks into a bank account he controlled for over three years after her death in 1998.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Secret Service, the Social Security Office of the Inspector General and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, working with detectives from the police departments of Howard County and Baltimore County. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Robert R. Harding and Joyce K. McDonald.